

Poetry.

TWO YEARS OLD.

Playing on the carpet near me
In a little cherub girl;
And her presence, much I fear me,
Sets my senses in a whirl;
For a book is open lying,
Full of grave philosophy,
And I own I'm vainly trying
There my thoughts to hold;
But, in spite of my essaying,
They will evermore be straying
To that cherub near me playing,
Only two years old.

With her hair so long and flaxen,
And her sunny eyes of blue,
And her cheeks so plump and waxen,
She is charming to the view.
There her voice to all who hear it
Breathes a sweet, entrancing spirit;
O, to be forever near it
Is a joy untold—
For 'tis ever sweetly telling,
To my heart with rapture swelling,
Of affection's joys dwelling—
Only two years old!

Now her ripe and honeyed kisses
(Honeyed, ripe for me alone),
Thrill my soul with various blisses,
Venus never yet has known.
When her twinkling arms around me,
All domestic joy hath crowned me;
And a fervent spell hath bound me
Never to grow cold;
O, there's not this side of Aiden,
Aught with loveliness so hidden,
As my little cherub maiden,
Only two years old!

Miscellaneous.

THE WIDOW BY BREVET; OR THAT SAD AFFAIR OF MISS PICKLIN, (FORMERLY MRS. KENI).

BY N. P. WILLIS.

Let me introduce the courteous reader
to two ladies.

Miss Picklin, a tall young lady of twenty-one, near enough to good-looking to permit of a delusion on the subject, (of which however she had an entire monopoly,) with cheeks always red in a small spot, lips not so red as the cheeks, and rather thin, sharpish nose, and waiverty slender; and last, (not least important,) a very long neck, scaled on either side into a resemblance to a scroll of shrivelled parchment, which might or might not be considered as a misfortune—serving her as a title-deed to twenty thousand dollars. The scald was inflicted, and the fortune left in consequence, by a maiden aunt, who, in the babyhood of Miss Picklin, attempted to cure the child's sore throat by an application of cabbage-leaves steeped in hot vinegar.

Miss Euphemia Picklin, commonly called Phemie—a good-humoured girl, rather inclined to be fat, but gifted with several points of beauty of which she was not at all aware, very much a pet among her female friends, and admitting, with perfect sincerity and submission, her sister's exclusive right to the admiration of the gentlemen of their admission.

Captain Isaiah Picklin, the father of these ladies, was a merchant of Salem, an importer of fish and opium, and once master of the brig "Simple Susan," which still plied between his warehouse and Constantinople—mails and codfish the cargo outward. I have not Miss Picklin's permission to mention the precise date of the events I am about to record, and leaving that point alone to the imagination of the reader, I shall set down the other particulars and impediments in her "course of true love" with historical fidelity.

Ever since she had been of sufficient age to turn her attention exclusively to matrimony, Miss Picklin had nourished a presentiment that her destiny was exotic; that the soil of Salem was too poor, and the ingenious lovers too mean; and that, potted in her twenty thousand dollars, she was a choice production, set aside for flowering in a foreign clime, and destined to be transplanted by a foreign lover. With this secret in her bosom, she had refused one or two gentlemen of middle age, recommended by her father, besides sundry score of young gentlemen of slender revenue in her set of acquaintances, till, if there had been any assertion but poetry in Shakespeare's assertion that it is

"Broom grows
Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves,"
the neighbouring brush barrens of Sanguis would have sold in lots at a premium. It was possibly from the want of nightingales, to whose complaining notes the gentleman of Verona tuned his distresses; that the discarded of Salem preferred consolations of Phemie Picklin.

News to the Picklins! Hassan Keni, the son of old Abdul Keni, was coming out in the "Simple Susan." A Turk—a live Turk—a young Turk, and the son of her father's rich correspondent in Turkey! "Ah me!" thought Miss Picklin.

The captain himself was rather taken aback. He had known old Abdul for many years, had traded and smoked with him in the *cafes* of Galata, had gone

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out with him on Sundays to lounge on the tombs of Scutari, and had never thought twice about his yellow gown and red trousers; but what the deuce would be thought of them in Salem? True, it was his son; but a Turk's clothes descend from father to son through three generations; he knew that, from remembering this very boy all but smothered in a sort of saffron blanket with sleeves like pillow-cases—his first assumption of the *toga virilis*. (Not that old Picklin knew Latin, but such was his sentiment better expressed.) Then he had never been asked to the house of the Stamboul merchant nor introduced to his wives nor his daughters—(indeed he had forgotten that old Keni was near cutting his throat for asking after them)—but of course it was different in Salem. Young Keni must be the Picklin guest, fed and lodged, and the girls would want to give him a tea-party. Would he sit on a chair, or want cushions on the floor? Would he come to dinner with his breast bare and leave his boots outside? Would he eat rice pudding with his fingers? Would he think it indecent if the girls did not wear linen cloths, Turkey fashion, over their mouths and noses. Would he bring his pipes? Would he fall on his face and say his prayers four times a day, wherever he should be, (with a clean place handy?) What would the neighbors say? The captain worked himself into a violent perspiration with merely thinking of all this.

The Salemites have a famous museum, and know what manner of thing is your crocodile, but a live Turk consigned to Captain Picklin! It set the town in a fever!

It would have an indelicate opening for a conjecture as to Miss Picklin's present age were I to state whether or not the arrival of the "Simple Susan," was reported by telegraph. She ran in with a fair wind one Sunday morning, and was immediately boarded by the harbor master and Captain Picklin; and there, true to the prophetic bidding of old Isalah, the young Turk set cross-legged on the quarter-deck, in a turban and scarlet *ceteras*, smoking his father's identical pipe—no other, the captain would have taken his oath!

Up rose Hassan, when informed who was his visitor, and, taking old Picklin's hand, put it to his forehead. The weather-stained sea-captain had bleached in the counting house, and he had not, at first sight, remembered the old friend of his father. He passed the pipe into Isalah's hand and begged him to keep it as a memento of Abdul, for his father had died at the last Ramazan. Hassan had come out to see the world, and secure a continuance of codfish and good will from the house of Picklin, and the merchant got astride the tiller of his old craft, and smoked this news through his amber-mouthed legacy, while the youth went below to get ready to go ashore.

The reader of course would prefer to share the first impressions of the ladies as to their young Musselman's personal appearance; and I pass at once, therefore, to their disappointment, surprise, mortification and vexation, when, as the bells were ringing for church, the front door opened, their father entered, and, in followed a young gentleman in frock coat and trousers! Yes, and in his hand a hat—a black hat—and on his feet no yellow boots, but calfskin, mundane and common calfskin, and with no shaved head, and no twisted shawl around his waist; nothing to be seen but a very handsome young man indeed, with teeth like a fresh slice of cocoa-nut meat, and a very deliberate pronunciation to his bad English.

Miss Picklin's disappointment had to be gleet upon, for she had made great outlay of imagination upon the pomp and circumstance of wedding a white Othello in the eyes of wondering Salem; but Phemie's surprise took but five minutes to grow into a positive pleasure; and never suspecting, at any time, that she was visible to the naked eye during the eclipse of presence of her sister, she sat with a very admiring smile upon her lips, and her soft eyes fixed earnestly on the stranger, till she had made out a full inventory of his features, proportions, manners, and other stuff available in dream land. What might be Hassan's impression of the young ladies, could not be gathered from his manner; for, in the first place, there was a reserve which belonged to him as a

Turk, and in the second place, there was a violation of all oriental notions of modesty in the exposing his chin to masculine observation; and though he could endure the exposure, it was of course with that diffidence of gaze which accompanies the consciousness of improper objects—adding to his demeanor another shade of timidity.

Miss Picklin's shoulders were not inviolable to the limits of *terra cognita* by the cabbage-leaves which had exercised such an influence on her destiny; and as the scalds some what resembled two maps of South America (with Patagonia under each ear), she usually, in full dress, gave a clear view of the surrounding ocean—wisely thinking it better to have the geography of her disfigurement well understood, than, by covering a small extremity, (as it were, the Isthmus of Darien,) to leave an undiscovered North America to the imagination. She appeared accordingly at dinner in a costume not likely to diminish the modest embarrassment of Mr. Keni, (as she chose to call him)—extremely *decollete*, in a pink silk dress with short sleeves, and in a turban with a gold fringe, the latter, of course, out of compliment to his country. "Money is power," even in family circles, and it was only Miss Picklin who exercised the privilege of full dress at a mid-day dinner. Phemie came to table dressed as at breakfast, and if she felt at all envious of her sister's pink gown and elbows to match, it did not appear in her pleasant face or sisterly attention. The captain would allow anything, and do almost anything, for his rich daughter, but as to dining with his coachman, in hot weather, company or no company, he would rather

"be set quick" to the earth, and bowled to death with turnips," though that is not the way he expressed it. The *parti curre*, therefore, (there was no Mrs. Picklin) was, in the matter of costume rather incongruous, but, as the Turk took it for granted that it was all according to the custom of the country, the carving was achieved by the shirt-sleeved captain, and the pudding 'helped' by his bare-armed daughter, with no peculiar commotion in the elements. Earthquakes do not invariably follow violations of etiquette—particularly where nobody is offended.

After the first day, things took their natural course—as near as they were able.

Hassan was not very quick at conversation, always taking at least five minutes to put together for delivery a sentence of English, but his laugh did not hang fire, nor did his nose and smiles; and where ladies are voluble, (as ladies sometimes are,) this paucity of ammunition on the gentleman's part is no prelude to discomfiture. Then Phemie had a very fair smattering of Italian, and that being the business language of the Levant, Hassan took refuge in it whenever brought to a stand-still in English; a refuge, by the way, to which he seemed inclined to avail himself oftener than was consistent with Miss Picklin's exclusive property in his attention. Rebellious though Hassan might secretly have been to this authority over himself, Phemie was no accomplice, natural modesty combining with the long habit of subservience to make her even anticipate the exactions of the heiress; and so Miss Picklin had "Mr. Keni" principally to herself, promenading him through the streets of Salem, and bestowing her sweetness upon him from his morning entrance to his evening exit; Phemie relieving guard very cheerfully, while her sister dressed for dinner. It was possibly from being permitted to converse in Italian during this half hour, that Hassan made it the only part of the day in which he talked of himself and his home on the Bosphorus, but that will not account also for Phemie's sighing while she listened—never having sighed before in her life, not even while the same voice was talking English to her sister.

Without going into a description of the Picklin tea-party, at which Hassan was induced to figure in his oriental costume, while Miss Picklin sat by him on a cushion, turbaned, and (probably) cross-legged, *a la Sultana*, and without recording other signs satisfactory to the Salemites, that the young Turk had fallen to the scalded heiress, "As does the oprey to the fish that takes it, By sovereignty of nature," I must come plump to the fact that, on the Monday following, (one week after his

arrival,) Hassan left Salem unaccompanied by Miss Picklin. As he had asked for no private interview in the best parlor, and had made his final business arrangements with the captain, so that he could take passage from New York without returning, some people were inclined to fancy that Miss Picklin's demonstrations with regard to him had been a little premature. And "some people" chose to smile. But it was reserved for Miss Picklin to look round in church, in about one year from this event, and have her triumph over "some people;" for she was about to sail for Constantinople—sent for, as the captain rudely expressed it. But I must explain.

The "Simple Susan" came in, heavily freighted with a consignment from the house of Keni to Picklin & Co., and a letter from the American consul at Constantinople wrapped in the invoice. With the careful and ornate wording of an official epistle, it stated Effendi Hassan Keni had called on the consul, and partly from mistrust of his ability to express himself in English on so delicate a subject, but more particularly for the sake of approaching the object of his affections with proper deference and ceremony, he had requested that officer to prepare a document conveying a proposal of marriage to the daughter of Capt. Picklin. The incomplete state of his mercantile arrangements, while at Salem, the previous year, would account for his silence on the subject at that time, but he trusted that his preference had been sufficiently manifest to the lady of his heart, and as his prosperity in business depended on his remaining at Constantinople, enriching himself only for her sake, he was sure that the singular request appended to his offer would be taken as a mark of his prudence rather than as presumption. The cabin of the "Simple Susan," as Capt. Picklin knew, was engaged on her next passage to Constantinople by a party of Missionaries, male and female, and the request was to the intent that, in case of an acceptance of his offer, the fair daughter of the owner would come out under their sufficient protection, to be wedded, if she should so please, on the day of her arrival in the "Golden Horn."

As Miss Picklin had preserved a mysterious silence on the subject of "Mr. Keni's" attentions since his departure, and, as a lady with twenty thousand dollars in her own right is, of course, quite independent of paternal control, the captain, after running his eye hastily through the document, called to the boy who was weighing out a quintal of codfish, and bid him wrap the letter in a brown paper and run with it to Miss Picklin—taking it for granted that she knew more about the matter than he did, and would explain it all, when he came home to dinner.

In thinking the matter over, on his way home, it occurred to old Picklin that it was worded as if he had but one daughter. At any rate, he was quite sure that neither of his daughters was particularly specified, either by name or age. No doubt it was all right, however. The girls understood it.

"So, it's you Miss!" he said, as Miss Picklin looked round from the turban she was trying on before the glass. "Certainly Pa! Who else should it be?"

And there ended the captain's doubts, for he never again got sight of the letter, and the turmoil of preparation for Miss Picklin's voyage, made the house anything but a place for getting answers to impertinent questions. Phemie, whom the news had made silent and thoughtful, let drop a hint or two that she would like to see the letter, but a mysterious air, and "la! child, you wouldn't understand it," was check enough for her timid curiosity, and she plied her needle upon her sister's wedding dress with patient submission.

The preparations for the voyage went on swimmingly. The missionaries were written to, and willingly consented to chaperon Miss Picklin over the seas, provided her union with a pagan was to be sanctified by a Christian ceremonial. Miss Picklin replied with virtuous promptitude that the cake for the wedding was already soldered up in a tin case, and that she was to be married immediately on her arrival, under an awning on the brig's deck, and she hoped that four of the missionaries' wives would oblige her by standing up as her bridesmaids. Many square feet of codfish were unladed

from the Simple Susan to make room for boxes and jags, and one large case was finally shipped, the contents of which had been shopped for by ladies with families—no book of Oriental travels making any allusion to the sale of such articles in Constantinople, though, in the natural course of things, they must be wanted as much in Turkey as in Salem.

The brig was finally cleared, and lay off in the stream, and on the evening before the embarkation the missionaries arrived, and were invited to a tea-party at the Picklins. Miss Picklin had got "a little surprise for her friends with which to close the party—a walking tablet," as she termed it, in which she should suddenly make her apparition at one door, pass through the room, and go out at the other, dressed as a sultana, with a muslin kirtle and satin trousers. She disappeared accordingly half an hour before the breaking up; and, conversation rather languishing in her absence, the eldest of the missionaries rose to conclude the evening with a prayer, in the midst of which Miss Picklin passed through the room unperceived—the faces of the company being turned to the wall.

The next morning at daylight the Simple Susan put to sea with a fair wind, and at the usual hour for opening the store of Picklin & Co. she had dropped below the horizon. Phemie sat upon the end of the wharf and watched her till she was out of sight, and the captain walked up and down between two puncheons of rum which stood at the distance of a quarter-deck's length from each other, and both father and daughter were silent. The captain had a confused thought or two besides the grief of parting, and Phemie had feelings quite as confused, which were not all made up of sorrow for the loss of her sister. Perhaps the reader will be at the trouble of spelling out their riddles while I try to let him down softly to the catastrophe of my story.

Without confessing to any ailment whatever, the plump Phemie paled and thinned from the day of her sister's departure. Her spirits, too, seemed to keep her flesh and color company, and at the end of a month the captain was told by one of the good dames of Salem that he had better ask a physician what ailed her. The doctor could make nothing out of it, except that she might be fretting for the loss of her sister, and he recommended a change of scene and climate. That day Capt. Brown, an old mate of Isalah's, dropped in to eat a family dinner, and say good-bye, as he was about sailing in the new schooner Nancy for the Black Sea—his wife for his only passenger. Of course he would be obliged to drop anchor at Constantinople to wait for a fair wind up the Bosphorus, and part of his errand was to offer to take letters and nicknackeries to Mrs. Keni. Old Picklin put the two things together, and over their glass of wine he proposed to Brown to take Phemie with Mrs. Brown to Constantinople, leave them both there on a visit to Mrs. Keni, till the return of the Nancy from the Black Sea, and then re-embark them for Salem. Phemie came into the room just as they were touching glasses on the agreement, and when the trip was proposed to her, she first colored violently, then grew pale and burst into tears, but consented to go. And, with such preparations as she could make that evening, she was quite ready at the appointed hour, and was off with the land breeze the next morning, taking leave of nobody but her father. And this time the old man wiped his eyes very often before the departing vessel was "hull down," and was heartily sorry he had let Phemie go without a great many presents and a great many more kisses.

A fine, breezy morning at Constantinople! Rapidly down the Bosphorus shot the caïque of Hassan Keni, bearing its master from his country-house at Dolma-batchi to his warehouses at Galata. Just before the sharp prow rounded away toward the Golden Horn, the merchant motioned to the caïque to rest upon their oars, and, standing erect in the slender craft, he strained his gaze toward the anxious earnestness toward the Sea of Marmora. Not a sail was to be seen coming from the west, except a man-of-

war with a crescent flag at the peak, laying off toward Scutari from Seraglio Point, and with a sigh that carried the cloud off his brow, Hassan gaily squatted once more to his cushions, and the caïque sped merrily on. In and out, among the vessels at anchor, the airy barque threaded her way with the dexterous swiftness of a bird, when suddenly a cable rose beneath her, and lifted her half out of the water. A vessel newly arrived was hauling in to a close anchorage, and they had crossed her hawser as it rose to the surface. Pitched headlong into the lap of the nearest caïque, the Turk's snowy turban fell into the water, and was carried by the eddy under the stern of the vessel rounding to, and as the caïque was driven backward to regain it, the bereached owner sank back aghast—SIMPLE SUSAN OF SALEM staring him in the face in golden capitals.

"Oh! Mr. Keni! how do you do?" cried a well-remembered voice, as he raised himself to fend off by the rudder of the brig. And there she stood within two feet of his lips—Miss Picklin in her bridal veil, waiting below in expectant modesty, and though surprised by his peep into the cabin windows, excusing it as a natural impatience in a bridegroom coming to his bride.

The captain of the Susan, meantime, had looked over the taffrail, and recognised his old passenger, and Hassan, who would have given a cargo of opium for an hour to compose himself, mounted the ladder which was thrown out to him, and stepped from the gangway into Miss Picklin's arms! She had rushed up to receive him, dressed in her muslin kirtle and satin trousers, though, with her dramatic sense of propriety, she had intended to remain below till summoned to the bridal. The captain, of course, kept back from delicacy, but the missionaries stood in a cluster gazing on the happy meeting, and the sailors looked over their shoulders as they heaved at the windlass. As Miss Picklin afterwards remarked, "it would have been a *tableau vivant* if the deck had not been so very dirty!"

Hassan wiped his eyes, for he had replaced his wet turban on his head, but what with his surprise and embarrassment, [for he had a difficult part to play, as the reader will presently understand.] he had lost all memory of his little stock of English. Miss Picklin drew him gently by the hand to the quarter-deck, where, under an awning fringed with curtains partly drawn, stood a table with a loaf of wedding-cake upon it, and a bottle of wine and a bible. She nodded to the Rev. Mr. Griffin, who took hold of a chair and turned it round, and placing it against his legs with the back towards him, looked steadfastly at the happy couple.

"Good morning—good night—your sister—aspetta! per amor di Dio!" cried the bewildered Hassan, giving utterance to all the English he could remember, and seizing the bride by the arm.

"These ladies are my bridesmaids," said Miss Picklin, pointing to the missionaries' wives who stood by in their bonnets and shawls. "I dare say he expected my sister would have come as my bridesmaid!" she added, turning to Mr. Griffin to explain the outbreak as she understood it.

Hassan beat his hand upon his forehead, walked twice up and down the quarter-deck, looked around over the Golden Horn as if in search of an interpreter to his feelings, and finally walked up to Miss Picklin with a look of calm resignation, and addressed to her and to the Rev. Mr. Griffin a speech of three minutes, in Italian. At the close of it, he made a very ceremonious salaam, and offered his hand to the bride; and, as no one present understood a syllable of what he had intended to convey in his address, it was received as probably a welcome to Turkey, or perhaps a formal repetition of his offer of heart and hand. At any rate, Miss Picklin took it to be high time to blush and take off her glove, and the Rev. Griffin then bent across the back of the chair, joined their hands and went through the ceremony, ring and all. The ladies came up, one after another, and kissed the bride, and the gentlemen shook hands with Hassan, who received their good wishes with a curious look of unhappy resignation, and after cutting the cake and permitting the bride to retire for

a moment to take her feelings and place on her bonnet, the bridegroom made either a peremptory movement of departure, and the happy couple went off in the caïque toward Dolma-batchi, amid much waving of handkerchiefs from the missionaries, and hurrahs from the Salem hands of the Simple Susan.

And now, before giving the reader a translation of the speech of Hassan before the wedding, we must go back to some little events which had taken place one month previously at Constantinople.

The Nancy arrived off Seraglio Point, after a very remarkable passage, having still on her quarter the northwest breeze which had stuck to her like a bloodhound ever since leaving the harbour of Salem. She had brought it with her to Constantinople, indeed, for twenty or thirty vessels which had been long waiting a favorable wind to encounter the adverse current of the Bosphorus, were loosing sail and getting under way, and the pilot, knowing that the destination of the Nancy was also to the Black Sea, strongly dissuaded Captain Brown from dropping anchor in the Horn, with a chance of losing the good luck, and lying, perhaps a month, wind-bound in harbor. Understanding that the Captain's only object in stopping was to leave the two ladies with Keni, the opium merchant, the pilot, who knew the residence of Dolma-batchi, made signal for a caïque, and kept up the Bosphorus. Arriving opposite the little village of which Hassan's house was one of the chief ornaments, the ladies were lowered into the caïque and sent ashore—expecting of course to be received with open arms by Mrs. Keni—and then, spreading all her canvases, the swift little schooner sped on her way to Trebizond.

Hassan sat in the little pavilion of his house which looked out on the Bosphorus, eating his pilau, for it was the noon of a holiday, and he had not been that morning to Galata. Recognising at once the sweet face of Phemie as the caïque came near the shore, he flew to meet her, supposing that the "Simple Susan" had arrived, and that the lady of his love had chosen to come and seek him. The reader will understand of course that there was no Mrs. Keni.

And now to shorten my story.

Mrs. Brown and Phemie were at Hassan's house, with no other acquaintance or protector on that side of the world, and there was no possibility of escaping a true explanation. The mistake was explained and explained to Mrs. Brown's satisfaction. Phemie was the daughter of Captain Picklin, to whom the offer was transmitted, and as, by blessed luck, the Nancy had outailed the Simple Susan, Providence seemed to have chosen to set right for once, the traverse of true love. The English embassy was at Bulgurlu, only six miles above, on the Bosphorus, and Hassan and his mother and sisters, and Mrs. Brown and Phemie were soon on their way thither in swift caïques, and the happy couple were wedded by the English chaplain. The arrival of the Simple Susan was of course looked for, by both Hassan and his bride, with no little dismay. She had met with contrary winds on the Atlantic, and had been caught in the Archipelago, by a Levantier, and from the damage of the last she had been obliged to come to anchor off the little island of Paros and repair. This had been a job of six weeks, and meantime the Nancy had given them the go-by and reached Constantinople.

Hassan was daily on the look-out for the brig in his trips to town, and the morning of her arrival, his mind being put on edge for the day by his glance toward the Sea of Marmora, the stumbling so suddenly and so unprepared on the object of his dream, completely bewildered and unnerved him. Through all his confusion, however, and all the awkwardness of his situation, there ran a feeling of self-condemnation, as well as pity for Miss Picklin; and this had driven him to the catastrophe described above. He felt that he owed her some reparation, and as the religion in which he was educated did not forbear a plurality of wives, and there was no knowing but possibly she might be inclined to "do in Turkey as Turks do," he felt it incumbent on himself to state the fact of his previous marriage, and then offer her the privilege of becoming Mrs. Keni No. 2, if she chose to accept it. As he had no English at his command, he stated his dilemma and made his offer in the best language he had—Italian—and with the result the reader has been made acquainted.

Of the return passage of Miss Picklin, formerly Mrs. Keni, under the charge of Captain and Mrs. Brown, in the schooner Nancy, I have never learned the particulars. She arrived in Salem in very good health, however, and has since been distinguished principally by her sympathy for widows—based on what, I cannot very positively say. She resides at present in Salem with her father, Capt. Picklin, who is still the consignee of the house of Keni, having made one voyage out to sea